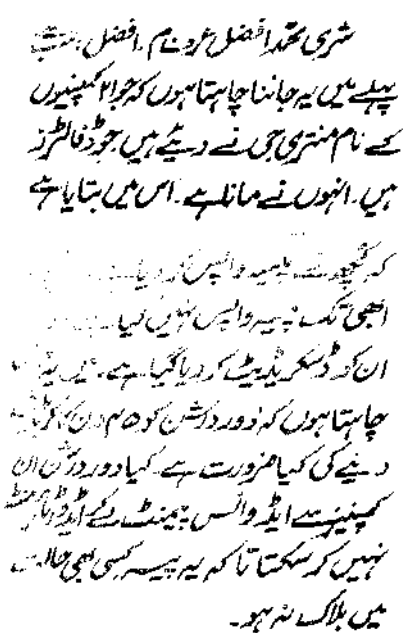
SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO; It is only 45 days. I will collect the information as to what the arrears were against the names for the period between 1992 and 1993. But as far as 1983.94 is concerned, the figuires are what I have stated in respect of Doordarshan and AIR. It is Rs. 12.61 crores in respect of Doordarshan and Rs. 1.38 crores in respect (of AIR. For the four-month period up to 15th July; 1994; I have given the figures of the amount recovered. That is Rs. 5.86 crores for Doordarshan and Rs 42 lakhs J5or AIR. If you want any other information; I will collect and supply it ... you.

DR. BIPLAB DAS GUPTA: Sir is the quality of the answer given by the hon. Minister a reflection of the quality of the programmes of Doordarshan itself?

श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ शीम अफजल : सब से पहले तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हू कि जो 21 कम्पनियों के नाम मंत्री जी ने दिए हैं, जो डिफाल्टर्ज हैं, इन्होंने माना है। इसमें बताया गया है कि कुछ ने पैसा वापिस कर दिया है और कुछ ने अभी तक पैसा वापिस नहीं किया है और उनको डिएक्रीडियेट कर दिया गया है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि दूरदर्शन को 45 दिन का क्रेडिट देने की क्या जरूरत है। क्या दूरदर्शन इन कम्पनीज से एडवांस पेमेंट ले कर के एडवरटाइजमेंट नहीं कर सकता ताकि यह पैसा किसी भी हालत में ब्लाक न हो ?



DR. K. P. SINGH DEO: Sir; this is a suggestion by the hon. Member which I shall pass on to Doordarshan.

Changes in the FERA positions

*26. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring about major changes in the FERA;

(b) if so; the deails of the changes likely to be made and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the FERA changes will have any impact on the present economic liberalisation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof? []

Transliteration in Arabic script.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V, CHANDRASHEKHAR, MURTHY): (a) to (d) Major chan-egs FERA were made vide Foregin Exchange Regulation (Amendment Act, 1993 (29 of 1993). Since the significant steps have been taken towards convertibility on current account by liberalising foreign exchange access for travel education payment for sundry service rendered from abroad as also' for making gifts and donations upto certain amount. comprehensive reviewing of FERA is currently being undertaken and for their changes including, if necessary. i;s replacement by new legis letion based on the findings of this Review may also be considered.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has made an attempt to answer my question, but as usual the reply of the Government is vague. People came to know about the proposed changes when one Mr. B. K. Pal. Controller, Exchange Control Depar-ment of the Reserve Bank of India, "aid on 23rd June, while addressing the members of the Confederation of; Indian Export Organisations in Calcutta, that the Government, in pursuance of its policy of econnmic liberalisation would be bringing forward some major changes in the Foreign Exchange (Regulation) Act. He also said that he did not rule out »he complete replacement of the FERA rules.

Sir. a Task Force was set up by the Reserve Bank of India for this purpose. The Task Force—it is reported -has completed its deliberations and his submitted its report.

In this connection, my first question would be: what are the main recommendations of the Task Force upopinted by the Reserve Bank of India? I would like to assure the hon. Minister here that whatever reply he gives would not be a commitment on his part, but he could certainly share his views with the House. Secondly, what is the approximate time-table of the Government to make these changes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH)-. Sir, as the hon. Memher has pointed out, after the amendments to the Foreign Exchange (Regulation) Act last year, we have been considering what further amendments are necessary consistent with the policy of economic liberalisation. I mentioned in my Budget Speech that we propose to done towards a regime of current account convertibility of the rupee so that, as a result of this, most restrictions on the current account would be removed. But we do want to nhase this thing in such a manner that any administrative problems, any transitional problems, that arise would be taken care of.

It was in pursuance of this that wo had requested the Reserve Bank of India to appoint a Task Force. The Task Force has gone into this matter. It is now under discussion with the Government, We have differ. ent points of view. As of now, I cannot say as to what would be the final reaction of the Government. All these matters are under discussion. We have not taken a view as to what amendments to make, or, when to make those amendments. This is the position now.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: I am grateful to the hon. Finance Minister for the reply he has given My second supplementary would be in tune with the policy of liberalisa-'ion and with the handsome foreign exchange reserves which have been built up, is the Government planning to do away with the necessity of obtaining Government approval. Government permission, for setting up joint ventures abroad? The Govern-

ment could, perhaps, think of this also while bringing forward these changes.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH; Sir, I think we have greatly simplified the process of clearance of, proposals in volving joint ventures, but I do not feel the stage has come when India can really say that we can freely al low the export of capital. We are on balance, still a net importer of capital and, therefore I do feel for the time being we do need some restrictions on export of capital from India. As and wher-our situation improves that we have a capital account convertibility, then all these restrictions will go. But I have said on many occasions that although our objective is ultimately to move towards a capital account convertibility, it will take quite some time before we reach there.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SING-LA: Sir, I would like to say that there are a lot of violations of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, and prosecutions the violations do not normally succeed in the courts. But. there are vast power under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act. and they really make-a lot of bucks for themselves. Would the Government apply its mind to completely abolish this Act as such or not?

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Sir, I did consider this, I think soon after our Government came into office, but in the light of events that took place last year in the Bombay bomb blast and all those associated things, I felt the time is not right to take such a drastic stop right now.

DR. B1PLAB DASGUPTA; Sir, I am very happy that the Finance Minister has made a categorical statement today that as far as capital account convertibility is concerned, he would give it a lot of thought before a final decision is taken. This is very good. because earlier the Finance Minister inadvertently made an an-mffluncenwsnt publicly that within two years capital account will be made convertable. I am very happy to note this change that at least they are now more cautions than they have been one month or two months ago. But the point I am making is, -even on current account the Government should really examine the experience of other countries for instance China. Now, China has not yet adopted current account convertibility. Again there is the experience of some other countries which have gone in for it and got into trouble, like many of the Latin American countries. There-fore_ I would like to know from the Minister whether any stully has been conducted by his Ministry to examine the various implications of this convertibility and also whether they have drawn some conclusions from that for the Indian economy,

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir. there is no doubt that we have, considered these matters. It is after consideration of all the pros and cons that I announced in my budget speech the decision of the Government to move towards cur-rente account convertibility. Also it is necessary for the House to know that in the environment that prevails today, all countries of South Asia today announced current account convertibility. AIso, all countries South Asia are far ahead of India with regard to reducing tarif rates with regard to removing quantitiaive import restric-tions, and if we really want to curb smuggling, I think we have to align our import regimes including our foreign exchange regimes with those of the other countries of South Asia. I think this is necessary. It is precisely because of these decisions that I announced, as a part of that reform process, our decision to move towards current account convertibility.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Has a study been conducted? That was my question. Can we get a copy of the study or not?

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: I am sorry, this matter we consider all the time. This is the bread and butter of the Reserve Bank and the Ministry of Finance, this is their work.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: But can I have a copy of that?

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH I am sorry, I. do not hare a study for pub licatior .

SHHI SHIVAJIRAO GIRIDHAR PATIL: Mr. Chairman, my congratulations to the Minister for building up very good foreign exchange reseryes! But sometime back I came across a news item which said that, though the foreign exchange reserves a*re steading* at 17 billion dollars, leilther the Reserve Bank nor the Minister of Finance has the necessary expertive to manage these finances. I would ',1 like the hon. Finance Minis-'.-".' to react to this.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: I think, Sir, there is no truth in that statement that we have no expertise. I think we have handled the whole foreign exchange situation quite well. I think the whole world 'cnows it. So, I think, there is no basis for the fear that. it we do not have the experience or the expertise to handle the inflow 'of foreign exchange. It is cer tainly true that largre inflows of foreign exchange do create problems, but, I think, these are the problems of penalty. There i_s certainly a pressure on the domestic monetary supply. The Reserve Bank has taken certain actions to neutralise the impact on the monetary supply. But, sooner or later, if the foreign exchange situation remains as comfortable an it is. I think, we must have a close look at -our import regime. We will have to further liberalise our 'mport regime and take other associa-ted measures.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Sir, the FERA is an Act of Parliament. All I want to extract from the hon. Minister is an assurance that before any substantive changes are made in the provisions of the Act, Parliament will be duly consulted.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: I think Sir, it goes without saying that any legislative changes can be made only with the approval of Parliament .

SHRI ASHOK MITRA; That should he on record.

विज्ञापनों से अर्जित राजस्व

***27. श्री गोपाल सिंह जी सोलंकी :** क्या **सूचना और प्रसारण** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) पिछले तीन वर्षों के दौरान अहमदाबाद, राजकोट, भुज, सूरत और बड़ौदा दूरदर्शन केन्द्रों द्वारा विज्ञापनों से प्रति वर्ष कुल कितना राजस्व अर्जित किया गया है ;

(ख) विज्ञापन शुल्क की दरों का ब्यौरा क्या है ;

(ग) क्या और अधिक संख्या में विज्ञापन दाताओं को आकृष्ट करने के लिए विज्ञापन शुल्क की दरों में कमी करने का कोई प्रस्ताव है ;

(घ) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ङ) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ?

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री के. पी. सिंह देव) : (क) दूरदर्शन केन्द्र, अहमदाबाद जो कि गुजरात में एकमात्र ऐसा केन्द्र है जहां विज्ञापन बुक किए जाते हैं, से संबंधित ब्यौरे निम्न प्रकार से हैं :—

1991–92	3.03 करोड़ रुपए
1992–93	3.69 करोड़ रुपए
1993–94	6.01 करोड़ रुपए